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HAWAIIAN ANNEXATION
AND
EXTENSION OF AMERICAN INFLUENCE.

SPEECH

OF

HON. ALBERT M. TODD,

OF MICHIGAN,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

JUNE 15, 1898.

"Having practiced the acquisition of territory for nearly sixty years, the question of constitutional power to do so is no longer an open one with us."

—LINCOLN.

WASHINGTON.

1898.

A. M. S.



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Mr. W. A. Smith

Hawaiian Annexation and the Extension of American Influence.

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields:
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven:
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?

There is no constitutional difficulty as to the acquisition of territory, and whether when acquired it may be taken into the Union by the Constitution as it now stands will become a question of expediency.—*Jefferson.*

SPEECH

OF

HON. ALBERT M. TODD,

OF MICHIGAN,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Wednesday, June 15, 1898.

The House having under consideration the joint resolution (H. Res. 259) to provide for annexing the Hawaiian Islands to the United States—

Mr. TODD said:

Mr. SPEAKER: The importance of the pending resolution, by which it is proposed to annex to the territory of our Union distant islands of the sea, many of whose inhabitants differ from us in language, religion, and social customs, can not be overestimated. I have therefore listened with interest to the arguments of those gentlemen who have so ably opposed the resolution, actuated by motives which, I trust, are patriotic, and for reasons which, in their judgment, are for the best interests of the American people.

And, sir, I too should view this action with alarm if I thought their fears and objections were well grounded, and that it was the purpose of this measure to inaugurate an era of imperial aggrandizement by an aggressive colonial policy through military conquest over weaker nations, resulting in riveting a more rigorous and centralized government upon our citizens, enforced by a great standing army. If I thought this was the inspiring motive, I should give both my vote and voice in opposition.

But, sir, I am glad to say that, highly as I personally respect the opponents of the measure, I believe their fears are largely groundless and that a careful survey of the entire question furnishes an overwhelming evidence in favor of annexation.

NO CONQUEST CONTEMPLATED.

It is known to everyone that the proposed measure does not contemplate any invasion of the islands by force of arms or their conquest by what is often a more dangerous power, subtle diplomacy. On the contrary, the contemplated action is one that was

first urged by the Hawaiians themselves nearly fifty years ago, and which they have ever since had constantly in view. It is no new question or policy of either our nation or the little commonwealth that seeks the protection of our flag, the fellowship of our people, and the benefits of our civilization. I shall briefly review the history of these interesting negotiations, the reasons in favor of annexation, with a glance at the history and nature of the islands, and the objections urged against the adoption of this resolution.

THE CONTEMPLATED ANNEXATION THE RESULT OF FRIENDLY NEGOTIATIONS.

In 1851 the King, hard pressed by the aggressions of England and France, first formally sought the protection of our nation by delivering to our representative a deed of cession of the islands to the United States. In 1854 our Secretary of State authorized a treaty of annexation, but the negotiations were broken by the death of the King while they were pending. In 1893 a new annexation treaty was negotiated, but while pending in our Senate a change of Administration caused its withdrawal by the President before ratification. June 16, 1897, a treaty was again negotiated similar to the pending resolution, and which, with other papers related to the subject, I will submit as an appendix to my remarks. This treaty has been already approved by the people of Hawaii and ratified by their Senate.

There is, therefore, no hasty action by either party to the compact; no undue stress; no objection by foreign nations which would lead to international complications. It is only the natural and logical result of intelligent negotiations for many years between two sovereign nations, through their accredited representatives, acting in friendly concert to promote the mutual interests of both nations.

WE SHOULD BE GOVERNED BOTH BY ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST AND THE CLAIMS OF HUMANITY.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that nations, like individuals, should be actuated by the highest considerations both of their own welfare and that of humanity. The law of nature, through which we have life, makes it the first duty of every being to protect and extend its own existence so that it can best fulfill the mission of its Creator. As the Creator has placed under the control of every person the development of his own faculties and holds him responsible for their proper use and preservation, it may be well said both of nations and individuals that "self-preservation is the first law of nature." But while our first duty is to ourselves, it can not be severed from our obligations to a world-wide humanity, of which we are all a part. I wish, then, to discuss this question both from the standpoint of American interests and welfare and of mankind at large.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the motives which led us to the present war with the Kingdom of Spain are analogous to those which have brought forward the present measure. In both resolutions the protection of the rights and interests of our own nation stand side by side with the interests of humanity. In the joint resolution (H. Res. 209) which I had the honor to introduce in Congress March 30, declaring the independence of the Cuban Republic, to be enforced by armed intervention, if necessary, the outrage to the humane and Christian sentiments of the American people, through the barbaric cruelties of the Spaniards toward an oppressed people beyond the jurisdiction of our Government, were

placed side by side with the assassination of our own seamen, the destruction of an American battle ship, and the interests of American industries and commerce.

And, sir, the result of the magnanimous spirit and lofty motives which inspired our nation to prevent at any sacrifice the continuance of Spanish atrocities on the Western Hemisphere has been that in this struggle of arms we have had the moral support of the great nations of the earth. Had we been actuated by merely selfish motives or a desire for conquest, the nations of Europe would have found in our aggressiveness a menace to the security of their own territorial possessions. Nor could we then have implored the blessings of Almighty God upon our cause, nor would His Providence have so ordered events that the struggling native islanders of the Philippines as well should be freed from the barbarisms of the land of the Inquisition. Nor could we have hoped for the splendid and speedy triumph of American arms in the Pacific which has inscribed the name of Admiral Dewey and his brave seamen above that of Lord Nelson, and made Manila Bay more historic than Trafalgar! [Applause.]

THEIR STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE.

Our war with Spain has emphasized the fact that our national safety and prosperity require increased harbors for vessels both of war and commerce. While opposed to inaugurating an era of imperial conquest at the expense of our free institutions, yet, believing that this nation has a God-given mission to perform as the standard bearer of civil liberty and progress for the ultimate advancement of all the nations of the earth, it becomes our duty to use all the means which Providence has placed before us for maintaining the integrity of our possessions and due respect for our demands, always to be founded on justice. The hostilities in which we are now engaged demonstrate that, as war may be sometimes unavoidable, it is necessary that our ships, both of war and peace, should have convenient harbors of refuge for safety in times of storm, accident, or war, as well as convenient stations for coal and supplies.

England, with rare foresight, many years ago secured insular and littoral possessions in every corner of the earth, by which her interests and power on land as well as sea have been greatly advanced.

On the other hand, the lack of adequate coaling stations has, fortunately for us, greatly crippled the efficiency of the Spanish navy. It is well known that modern men-of-war, especially those which attain high speed and whose engines in some cases develop 18,000 horsepower, rapidly consume enormous quantities of coal and, owing to their special construction, have coal storage but for short trips only. In fact, the question of coal supply has perplexed the Spanish thus far on the Atlantic more, perhaps, than any other condition relative to their naval strategy.

But aside from the necessities of our Navy, our merchant vessels as well need, both in peace and war, both in accident and safety, harbors under the protection of our flag for all of the needs of commerce, travel, and the advancement of science, to be liberally encouraged by our Government.

A BRIEF VIEW OF THE ISLANDS.

The Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands lie about 600 miles north of the equator, their capital, Honolulu, being 2,089 miles southwest from San Francisco, 3,399 miles southeast of Yokohama, 4,917 miles southeast of Hongkong, and about 4,000 miles from the

Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand. Their combined area is about 7,000 square miles, two-thirds of which is contained in the principal island, Hawaii. The capital city, Honolulu, is located on the island of Oahu, and on the coast of this island, 12 miles away, is situated the famous Pearl Harbor, now under control of our Government, said to be the finest natural harbor on the globe, capable of floating all the navies of the world. This harbor consists of a large inland lake, broken by islands which maintain a smooth surface of water, protected by hills from storms and the guns of hostile fleets, and connected with the sea by a long and narrow channel, easily fortified.

It is objected that we have already a shorter route to China and Japan, with opportunity for a coaling station at Una'ska, in the Aleutian Islands, about 2,000 miles north of Hawaii; but that route is rarely taken, owing to storms, fogs, and floating ice from the polar sea prevailing there, dangerous to navigation. On the other hand, the route via Hawaii is an ideal one in every respect, and its freedom from storm is typical of the name of the ocean traversed—Pacific. In the event, also, of the completion of the great Nicaragua Canal, through which all of our ships of commerce and war will quickly pass from ocean to ocean, these islands will be on the most direct route to China, Japan, and the Philippines. They are also on the direct route to Australia and New Zealand, with whom we have a large commerce.

Regarding the climate and the other physical and natural attractions of the islands, an enthusiastic traveler says:

"It is simply 'Fairylan', 'Rainbowland;' a land of perfect rest and repose; a land of color; a land of magnificent hills, cloud-topped, of a thousand valleys and ravines, of streams and waterfalls, of glorious sea and sky."

I had the pleasure recently of spending an evening with the able and statesmanlike minister of the Hawaiian Republic, Hon. Lorrin A. Thurston. He showed me an extensive series of photographs illustrating the islands, their people, products, vegetation, etc., and it certainly seemed like fairylan indeed.

Each island consists of one or more mountains, with valleys and plains between. The soil is decomposed lava, irrigated by mountain streams and wells. The principal products are sugar, coffee, and fruits. About 80,000 acres are devoted to sugar cane, and in 1896, 221,000 tons of sugar were exported. If annexed to this country, this sugar will reach American consumers free of duty, and the combine of the oppressive sugar trust may be broken.

The healthful and balmy climate has given these islands the appellation of "The Paradise of the Pacific." The temperature is mild and even, averaging about 82° in summer and 74° in winter. The lowest temperature at the level of the sea in winter is about 56° and the warmest in summer about 88°. The cool northeast trade winds blow eight or nine months in the year.

With all these gifts of nature inviting us, as well as the entreaties of the citizens of this little Commonwealth, who desire to enjoy our institutions, how can we refuse? As the muse best expresses it:

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields;
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven:
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?

THE NATIVE RACE.

When Capt. James Cook discovered (or rediscovered) these islands December 8, 1778, while circumnavigating the globe with his armed vessels, the *Resolution* and *Discovery*, as so interestingly narrated in his famous Voyages, he found a confiding race of aborigines, who welcomed him and afterwards worshiped him as a god, the number of whom he estimated at 400,000. During fierce wars for supremacy among rival chiefs nearly one-half of the inhabitants lost their lives about the beginning of the present century.

THE DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS OF "MODERN CIVILIZATION" UPON THE ISLANDS.

It is a sad fact that although in 1840 King Kamehameha III, called "The Good," granted the people a constitution, abolished idolatry, and encouraged Christianity, yet contact with "civilization," through contagious disease, and more especially the importation of intoxicating liquors, with the art of producing them, has so decimated the population that in 1896 but 31,000 native Hawaiians remained! And all authorities agree that in but a few years a once happy people of trustful and confiding "children of nature" will be extinct, with no trace except in history! What a commentary on our civilization! Our own country is witnessing a like passing of the "Red Men of the Forest." And if the influence of strong drink has so rapidly decimated the aborigines, injured to privations and hardships, who can measure the extent of its baneful effects on the happiness, the power, and the lives of our "civilized" Anglo-Saxon nation?

POPULATION.

The census of 1896 shows the population to be 109,020.

In round numbers the different nationalities are represented as follows:

Native Hawaiians	31,000
Japanese	24,400
Portuguese	15,100
Chinese	21,600
Part Hawaiian and part foreign blood	8,400
Americans	3,400
British	2,200
German	1,400
Norwegian and French	479
All other nationalities	1,055

Expressed in percentage the population is as follows:

	Per cent.
Native Hawaiian	28
Japanese	22
Chinese	20
Americans and Europeans by birth or descent	22
Mixed blood	8

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, PAST, PRESENT, AND AS PROPOSED BY ANNEXATION.

Early in the present century the tribes of the various isles were united in a Kingdom by Kamehameha I, chief of the most powerful tribe. This, said to be the "noblest of all savage dynasties," ended in 1872 by the death of Kamehameha IV. The Government, however, remained a monarchy until January, 1893, when Queen Liliuokalani attempted to abrogate certain constitutional rights and to disfranchise the white population.

Thereupon a provisional government was established and a constitution framed and adopted, which was promulgated on July 4, 1894, the people desiring that the two nations should be united by the same historic birthday. Thus by every avenue open to them the Hawaiians show the sympathy and love for our country and its institutions.

CHINESE WILL BE EXCLUDED.

Objection is made that Asiatics will be thus allowed citizenship, and that the interests of American labor as well as the safety of American institutions will be jeopardized. If this were true, I should oppose the measure with all my power. Happily both the facts and effects are the opposite, for it will be seen by referring to the resolution of annexation that the islands are to be "annexed as a part of the territory of the United States, and are subject to the dominion thereof," etc.

It is also further provided that, "There shall be no further immigration of Chinese into the Hawaiian Islands except upon such conditions as are now or may be hereafter allowed by the laws of the United States; and no Chinese, by reason of anything contained herein, shall be allowed to enter the United States from the Hawaiian Islands.

"The President [of the United States] shall appoint five commissioners, at least two of whom shall be residents of the Hawaiian Islands, who shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, recommend to Congress such legislation concerning the Hawaiian Islands as they shall deem necessary or proper."

It is also stipulated that pending the above legislation the present laws of the Republic of Hawaii shall be in force, so far as they do not conflict with the Constitution or laws of the United States. By the present laws of Hawaii, Asiatics are not eligible to citizenship or to a vote. Thus the interests of labor as well as the integrity of our institutions seem to be fully protected. Furthermore, labor should be benefited by the enlarged market for its products and the decreased cost of the sugar it consumes.

The present government is almost identical with our own. The members of its Senate and House of Representatives are elected for the same term as ours. Their President, whom many of us have met, is of American parentage and a graduate of Williams College. The foundation of their laws, like ours, is the common law of England, and their courts are founded on the American system. Thus they are already accustomed to our institutions and laws.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL ARGUMENT.

But objection is made that there is no authority in the Constitution for acquiring foreign territory. If this were true, Mr. Chairman, a great part, more than half, of our present territory, including some of our most important States, is not properly within the Union. Who shall say that the many States comprised in the Louisiana purchase, and California, Texas, and New Mexico should have been repelled?

But, sir, on this question, as on others, we have the highest authorities for saying not only that foreign territory can be annexed when done for just reasons, without a violation of the Constitution as liberally construed, but where the Constitution is defective by reason of contingencies not thought of by its framers, it is our duty then, as always, to be guided by an enlightened conscience as the needs of our nation and those of humanity shall dictate.

The Constitution was intended to secure civil rights and enlarge the benefits of free government—not to abridge them.

But happily we have many high constitutional authorities as well as historic precedents for the proposed annexation. These having already been brought to public attention, I shall only briefly refer to a few instances.

When the Louisiana purchase was under consideration, the great Jefferson, who, as the author of the Declaration of Independence, on which the Constitution was afterwards based, should be the highest authority, said:

“There is no constitutional difficulty as to the acquisition of territory, and whether when acquired it may be taken into the Union by the Constitution as it now stands will become a question of expediency.”

President Lincoln also said:

“Having practiced the acquisition of territory for nearly sixty years, the question of constitutional power to do so is no longer an open one with us. * * * On this whole proposition, including the appropriation of money for the acquisition of territory, does not the expediency amount to almost necessity, without which the Government itself can not be perpetuated?”

In the Dred Scott decision Chief Justice Taney said:

“The power to expand the territory of the United States by the admission of new States is plainly given; and in the construction of this power by all the departments of the Government it has been held to authorize the acquisition of territory, not fit for admission at the time, but to be admitted as soon as its population and situation would entitle it to admission. It is acquired to become a State, and not to be held as a colony and governed by Congress with absolute authority; and as the propriety of admitting a new State is committed to the sound discretion of Congress, the power to acquire territory for that purpose, to be held by the United States until it is in a suitable condition to become a State upon an equal footing with other States, must rest upon the same discretion.

“It is a question for the political department of the Government, and not the judicial; and whatever the political department of the Government shall recognize as within the limits of the United States the judicial department is also bound to recognize, and to administer in it the laws of the United States, so far as they apply, and to maintain in the territory the authority and rights of the Government, and also the personal rights and rights of property of individual citizens, as secured by the Constitution.”

So, according to this learned judge, the power of Congress in regard to territorial acquisition is supreme, and not subject to the review of the Supreme Court.

It simply remains, then, to decide “What is for the highest interests of our nation and humanity?” Having faith, Mr. Speaker, that the American people will continue to be inspired with humane and lofty motives, I trust the proposed measure will pass and that our action in rescuing the oppressed people both of the West Indies and the Philippines, joined to this, will be the auspicious introduction to a century of advancement for us and for all mankind! [Applause.]

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